# VETERANS' **SS**2008

BROUGHT TO YOU BY YOUR VA HEALTHCARE NETWORK UPSTATE NEW YORK



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# Your VA Healthcare System is here for you—all year long

ealth isn't something you do on a Friday and stop on a Monday. It isn't just a New Year's resolution that disappears after a few weeks. Being healthy and staying healthy is a lifelong goal, one that translates into a longer and better quality of life.

To help make your life a good one, we have put together this 2008 health calendar instead of our fall 2007 *Veterans' Wellness* newsletter; it's designed to have you start right and stay right the whole year through—and after.

We've made this calendar fun because staying fit is fun. You'll find places to put your weight and exercise goals, as well as words of inspiration and encouragement. We've even included a puzzle and some easy-to-make, heart-healthy recipes to keep your motivation strong.

As you browse through this calendar, you'll find important messages from your VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York, including information about:

- MOVE! VA way to fitness designed for everyone.
- Diabetes control. Did you know that your local VA Medical Center has a lot of user-friendly information about this debilitating condition?
- Help in a time of crisis. VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York helped establish the 24/7 National Suicide Prevention Lifeline this summer.

One final note: If you haven't had your Veteran Identification Card (VIC) updated within the past five years, stop by your local VA medical center and have a new photo taken. Your VIC is a convenient, private and safe way to keep all your medical information handy whenever you need it. For more information, contact your local VA medical center or call the Health Benefits Service Center at 1-877-222-VETS (8387).

We hope you'll enjoy looking through and reading this calendar. Stay strong. Be happy. This information will help.

To your good health,

Stephen L. Lemons

Stephen L. Lemons, Ed.D., FACHE Network Director

## The power of prevention

VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York recommends the guidelines below to prevent disease—or at the very least detect it at an early stage. Use the chart below to help keep you on the healthy track; fill it in and keep it handy.

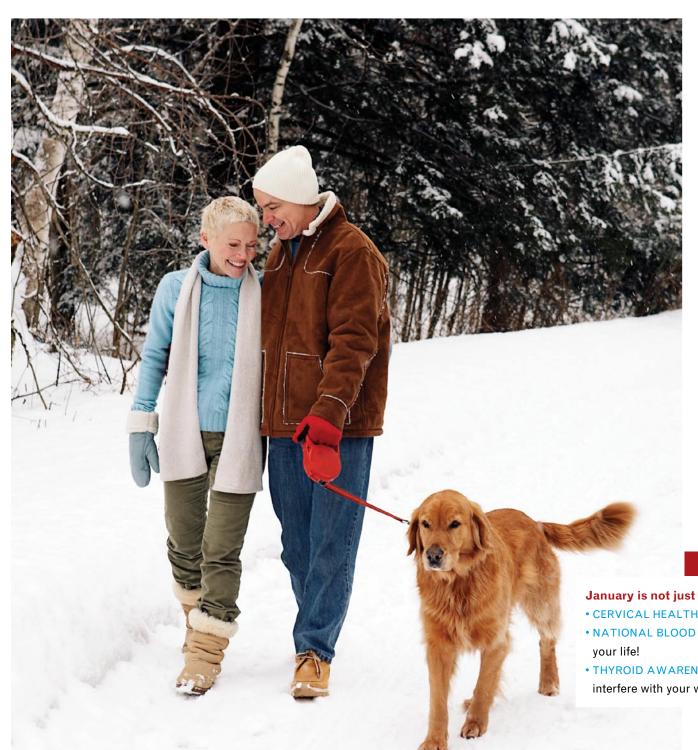
Stephen L. Lemons

**Network Director** 

# "Every patient carries her or his own doctor inside."

—Albert Schweitzer, Nobel Prize–winning physician and humanitarian

ROUTINE HEALTH C	ARE MONITORING		
WHAT IT IS	WHYYOU NEED IT	VA RECOMMENDATIONS	MY VITAL STATISTICS
Blood pressure reading	High blood pressure is called the silent killer because it has no symptoms	Every year after age 18	/ mm Hg
Cholesterol profile	Low HDL (good) cholesterol and high triglycerides and LDL (bad) and total cholesterol can increase heart disease risk	Every year	mg/dL (total) mg/dL (HDL) mg/dL (LDL) mg/dL (triglycerides)
Influenza immunization	To prevent complications from the flu	Every year for ages 50 and older; sooner if a chronic medical condition such as diabetes, asthma or heart disease is present	I got my flu shot:/
Pneumonia vaccine	To prevent serious respiratory illness	Every 5 to 10 years for ages 65 and older	I got my pneumonia vaccine://
Prostate cancer education and screening	For early detection of cancer	Prostate cancer education every year; prostate cancer screening for men over age 50, if appropriate	I received information on prostate cancer://  I got my prostate cancer screening://
Breast and cervical cancer screenings	For early detection of precancerous tissue growth and cancer	Follow American Cancer Society guidelines: optional monthly breast self-exam starting at age 20 and mammogram and clinical breast exam every year starting at age 40; cervical cancer screening every year for women over age 21, or earlier if sexually active	I got my mammogram://
Colorectal cancer screening	For early detection of precancerous tissue growth	Begin screening at age 50	I got my colorectal cancer screening://
Hepatitis C risk screening	Exposure to the hepatitis C virus can harm your liver	For all veterans, especially those exposed to the virus via sexual contact, tattoos or piercing, blood transfusions before 1992 and the sharing of personal items	I got my hepatitis C screening://
Tobacco, alcohol and depression screenings	Smoking may lead to serious illness; alcohol abuse and depression can spiral out of control	Every year; your VA primary care staff will identify and treat any psychological issues and help with controlling substance abuse problems and quitting smoking	I quit smoking://
Routine eye examinations	To check for glaucoma, cataracts and other eye diseases	Every 2 years for ages 40 and older	I got my eye examination://



# JANUARY 2008

# Make this year a healthy one!

id you know that many of the risk factors for cardiovascular health are in your control? If you're overweight, sedentary and stressed out, your chance of having a heart attack increases. In other words, starting a healthier lifestyle now means decreasing your risk for heart disease—with other important benefits: lowering the risk of diabetes, gallstones, bone fractures, sleep apnea and certain cancers. Even better: Your quality of life will improve tremendously!

## How do you start? MOVE!

A weight-management program designed by VA National Center for Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (NCP), MOVE! helps veterans lose weight, keep it off and improve their health. Tailored to meet your individual needs, MOVE! lets you set the pace—with support and guidance along the way. Commit to get fit by contacting your local MOVE! coordinator or Upstate New York MOVE! coordinator Margaret Dundon, Ph.D., at (716) 862-8593.

# Did you know?

## January is not just for New Year's resolutions. It's also:

- CERVICAL HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH. Schedule your Pap test now.
- NATIONAL BLOOD DONOR MONTH. Know your blood type. It could save your life!
- THYROID AWARENESS MONTH. Sometimes an underactive thyroid can interfere with your weight-loss goals.

# "Aim for success, not perfection."

—David M. Burns, M.D., Medical Director of Respiratory Therapy at the University of California School of Medicine in San Diego

# JANUARY 2008

Studies show that keeping track of your weight-loss goals will help keep you on track. So cheer in 2008 with weight and exercise goals that you can look back on—with triumph! To keep only good things in mind, jot down your most memorable experience every month.

Starting weight:

Goal weight for 2008:

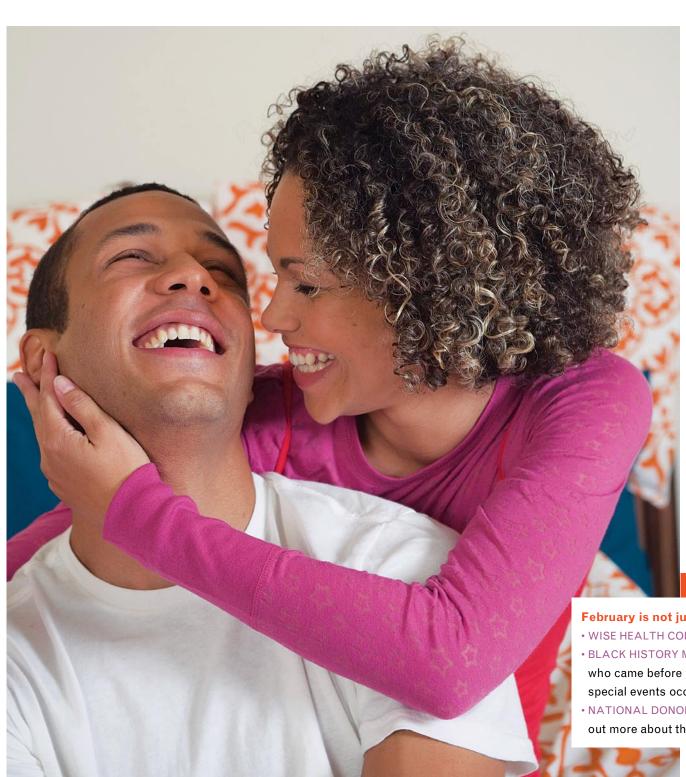
Goal weight for January: \_

Exercise goals: \_\_\_\_\_

What special memory did you make this month?\_\_\_\_\_

Make your **MOVE!** toward a better life today. For more information, go to **www.move.va.gov** or **www.mypyramid.gov.** 

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		<b>1</b> New Year's Day	2	3	4	5
6	<b>7</b> Start keeping a food diary this week.	8	9	Muharram (Islamic New Year)	11	Seen a good movie lately?
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	Martin Luther King, Jr., Day	22	23	24	25	Walk 10 minutes today.
27	28	29	Make it a great day!	31	december 2007  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	february 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29



# FEBRUARY 2008

# Keep your heart happy!

People everywhere need to give their hearts a little love—and it doesn't have to be a chore. This month, the American Heart Association celebrates your heart, and all you have to do is WATCH:

**WEIGHT**. With today's array of good-for-your-heart unsaturated and zero trans fat products, you can "watch" yourself trim down.

**ACTIVITY**. Simply walking, swimming or doing your physical therapy exercises 10 minutes a day will have heart-healthy results.

**TOBACCO**. Yes, it's hard to quit, but you don't have to do it alone: Try VA Quit Smart. Ask your local VA medical center for information about this four-session group program.

**CHOLESTEROL**. Too much and it will clog your arteries, translating into less blood reaching your heart.

**HYPERTENSION**. Unchecked, it can lead to stroke, heart attack and heart failure. With do-it-yourself blood pressure monitors now in pharmacies and monthly screenings at community centers, keeping heart healthy is more convenient than ever.

Did you know?

## February is not just good for your heart. It also features:

- WISE HEALTH CONSUMER MONTH. Get the heart smarts you need!
- \* BLACK HISTORY MONTH. Celebrate your ethnicity and remember those who came before you. Go to **www.naacp.org** for information about special events occurring throughout the country.
- NATIONAL DONOR DAY, FEBRUARY 14. Organ donations save lives. Find out more about this life-saving gesture at www.organdonor.gov.

"I see great days ahead, great days possible to men and women of will and vision."

—Carl Sandburg, U.S. poet

# FEBRUARY 2008

eep your New Year's resolve by eating fewer calories and upping your walking time. Don't forget to "check in" with your VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York calendar:

Starting weight for February: \_

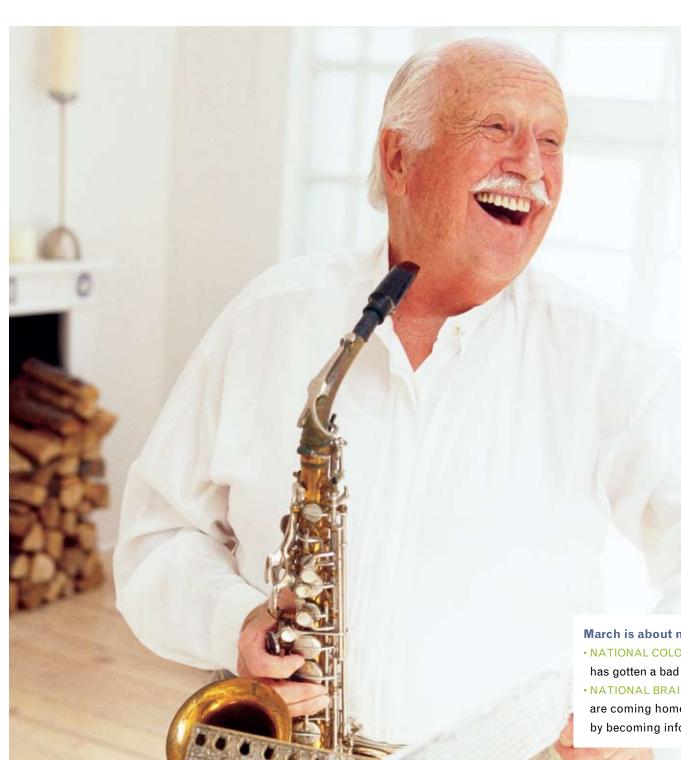
Goal weight for February: \_\_\_

Exercise goals: \_\_\_\_

What special memory did you make this month?

Be heart healthy!
Find important
cardiovascular
information 24/7,
365 days a year, at
www1.va.gov/cardiology.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
january 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	march 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31				1	<b>2</b> Groundhog Day
3	4  Read any good books?	5	6 Ash Wednesday	7	<b>8</b> Try whole-grain bread instead of white.	9
10	11	<b>12</b> Lincoln's Birthday	On your way home, pick up some flowers!	Valentine's Day National Donor Day	15	16
17	<b>18</b> President's Day	19	20	21	Washington's Birthday	23
24	25	26	27	28	29  It's been two months.  Don't you feel good?	



# **MARCH 2008**

# Have your cake—and make it healthy, too!

ealthy eating isn't just about raw carrots and tuna packed in water. Today, thanks to advances made by nutritionists, researchers and expert chefs, you can enjoy delicious full-course meals, snackseven cake—and still be healthy. Here are some tasteful "tricks" to turn your favorite megacalorie, heart-clogging, rich recipes into dishes that are heart healthy and low in fat, calories and sugar-all without sacrificing mouthwatering taste.

**SPRAY HEARTY**. Use a cooking spray instead of butter or oil when you bake, fry or sauté. You can even get flavors specific to your needs: a baking spray, an olive oil spray, even a grilling spray!

MAKE LOW-SODIUM, FAT-FREE BROTH YOUR BEST FRIEND. Use it to perk up rice dishes, stirfry meals and casseroles.

SUBSTITUTE LOW-FAT MILK. Low fat doesn't have to mean low taste. Some newer fat-free milk brands are richer than their more fattening counterparts. And 1 percent works fine if you dislike the taste of skim.

# Did you know?

## March is about more than healthy eating. It's also:

- NATIONAL COLORECTAL CANCER AWARENESS MONTH. Colonoscopy has gotten a bad rap. It's a painless procedure—and it could save your life.
- NATIONAL BRAIN INJURY AWARENESS MONTH. More and more veterans are coming home with traumatic brain injury (TBI). Help your loved ones by becoming informed.

# "The way to get started is to quit talking and begin doing."

—Walt Disney, film producer and co-founder of the Walt Disney Company

						MAR	CH 2008
eep moving and eating right—	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Jot down your progress this month:	february 2008 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16	april 2008 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19					1
Starting weight for March:	17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29	20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30					Enjoy a vegatable
Goal weight for March:	_	_	_			_	you've never eaten.
Exercise goals:  What special memory did you	Turn on the radio and sing along.	3	4		6	7	8
make this month?	Daylight-saving time begins	10	11	12	Work your walking up to 15 minutes this week.	14	15
Did you know that the	16 Palm Sunday	St. Patrick's Day	18	19	<b>20</b> First day of spring	21  Good Friday	22
American Cancer Society is a resource for you 24/7, 365 days a year?  Call 1-800-ACS-2345 or visit www.cancer.org to find out more.	Easter Sunday	24	25	It's in your power to be healthy.	27	28	29



# **APRIL 2008**

# You're not alone!

rink too much alcohol? Ask yourself these three questions: Do you have a drink four or more times a week? On the days you do drink, do you refill your glass seven or more times? Do you often have six or more drinks on one occasion? If you answered "yes" to any of these (or if you can't remember), make an appointment to see your VA health care provider. Only he or she can help you make the right diagnosis and provide treatment that really works.

## When the pain won't go away

We all get depressed at certain times in our lives, but when that depression spirals down into drug and alcohol abuse, making you feel so hopeless and helpless you've had suicidal thoughts ... STOP! Help is only a phone call away. VA has established a 24-hour National Suicide Prevention Lifeline where you can get understanding, compassion and help from trained mental health professionals. Reach out and call 1-800-273-TALK (8255) for help now!

# Did you know?

#### April showers don't only bring May flowers. April is also:

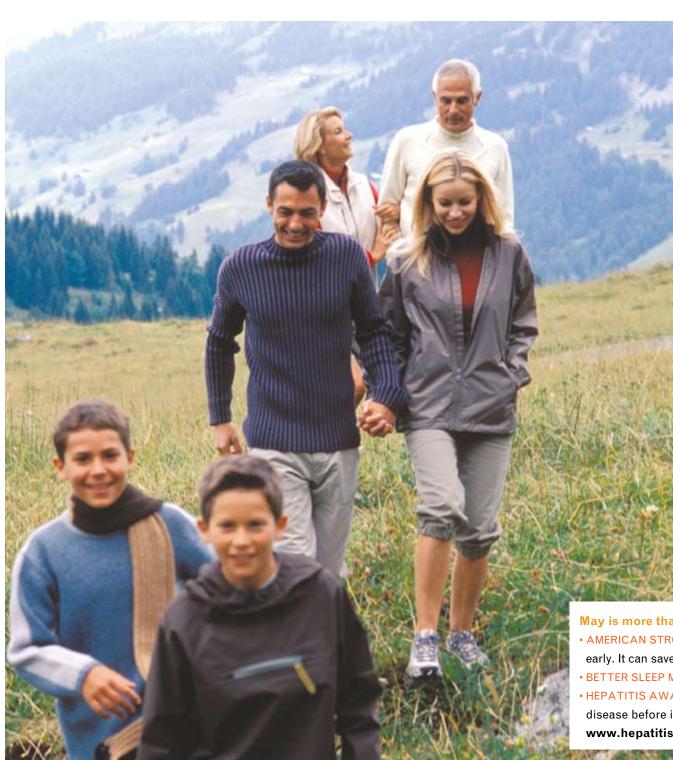
- FOOT HEALTH AWARENESS MONTH. Walking should never cause you pain. If your feet are killing you, see a podiatrist.
- IRRITABLE BOWEL SYNDROME AWARENESS MONTH. Don't be too embarrassed to seek treatment.
- CANCER CONTROL MONTH. Early detection is key to successful treatment. Schedule a checkup at your local VA medical facility today.

# "It's more important to know your weaknesses than your strengths."

—Ray Lee Hunt, Texas oil tycoon

# **APRIL 2008**

t's been four months since you	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
started your healthy new lifestyle.  Don't you feel good?  Starting weight for April:			1	2	3	<b>4</b> Try a different	5
Goal weight for April:			April Fool's Day			walking route.	
Exercise goals:	Take a 10-minute	7	8	9	Where would you like to be this time	11	12
What special memory did you make this month?	time-out today.	14	15	16	next year?	18	19
			Tax Day				Passover begins at sundown
	Stressed? Take three deep breaths.	21	<b>22</b> Earth Day	23	24	<b>25</b> Arbor Day	26
Are you or someone you love in trouble? Don't delay. Call the toll-free VA National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255).	27 Orthodox Easter	28	29 Life is good!	30		march 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	may 2008  1 2 3  4 5 6 7 8 9 10  11 12 13 14 15 16 17  18 19 20 21 22 23 24  25 26 27 28 29 30 31



# **MAY 2008**

# Away, arthritis!

rthritis is a painful condition—no matter what type you have. Keeping your body active helps reduce arthritis symptoms. All you have to do is *MOVE!* to get the help you need.

**The MOVE!23** is a questionnaire that helps develop an activity plan that works for you.

**MOVE! Q&A** will give you the tools you need to exercise safely—and maybe even make it fun!

**MOVE!** encourages you to stay active by helping you connect with other veterans in the program.

MOVE! is a veteran-tested program that's been shown to help veterans manage weight more successfully and stay active—both of which may relieve arthritic pain. Everything to get you started is at www.move.va.gov.

Play an active part in planning your treatment by contacting your local *MOVE!* coordinator or Upstate New York *MOVE!* coordinator Margaret Dundon, Ph.D., at (716) 862-8593.

The Arthritis Foundation has a wealth of information on living with arthritis. To find out more, call 1-800-568-4045 or go to www.arthritis.org.

# Did you know?

May is more than making merry. It's also:

- AMERICAN STROKE MONTH. Know the signs so you can seek treatment early. It can save your life.
- BETTER SLEEP MONTH. Are you getting enough shut-eye?
- HEPATITIS AWARENESS MONTH. Get screened for this serious disease before it causes major liver damage. Find out more. Go to www.hepatitis.va.gov for more information.

# "If you don't know where you are going, you'll end up someplace else."

—Yogi Berra, New York Yankee legend

# **MAY 2008**

Alk a mile with a smile! And don't forget to jot down how many miles you ended up with this month—and how many pounds you lost, too!

Starting weight for May:

Exercise goals:

What special memory did you make this month?

For more information about arthritis, contact the Arthritis Foundation at **1-800-568-4045** or **www.arthritis.org.** Go to **www.move.va.gov** to find out more about **MOVE!** 

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
april 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	june 2008 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30			Results are the best motivation.	2	3
4	<b>5</b> Cinco de Mayo	6	7	8	9	Have a favorite "May sweeps" TV show?
Mother's Day	12	13	14	Send a card to a soldier overseas.	16	17 Armed Forces Day
18	19	Stop and smell the flowers!	21	22	23	24
25	26  Memorial Day	27	28	29	30	Feel the air: Summer's coming!



# **JUNE 2008**

# Vision quest

e take a lot of things for granted, and our eyesight is one of them. We blink, we see, we rub—but what we sometimes forget is the need to protect. Eye trauma is a serious reality for any veteran who's been exposed to extreme conditions—whether you've recently returned from active duty or you've been a veteran for years. Keep your "sight" on your eyes all year 'round by:

#### WEARING DURABLE, UV-RATED SUNGLASSES.

Big, shielding sunglasses help protect you against the penetrating rays of the sun.

#### **SEEING AN OPHTHALMOLOGIST WHEN**

PROBLEMS ARISE. Returning veterans may have hurt their eyes because of explosions, lasers, chemical or biological insults and harsh environments. It's important to follow up on any traumas your eyes may have had—no matter how long ago you served.

ONCE A YEAR FROM YOUR LOCAL VA MEDI-CAL CENTER. Schedule an appointment today.

Did you know?

June isn't just about seeing and believing. It's also:

HOME SAFETY MONTH. VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York
makes sure your care continues once you leave our facilities.
 Experienced physical therapists, counselors and nurses assist you in
setting up your home to make it handicap accessible and safe from
potential dangers, such as falling. Call your local VA medical center
for more information.

# "Old is always fifteen years from now."

—Bill Cosby, comedian, actor and author

# JUNF 2008

Summer is officially here this month. Look and feel smart by tracking your weight and exercise goals:

Starting weight for June: \_\_\_\_\_

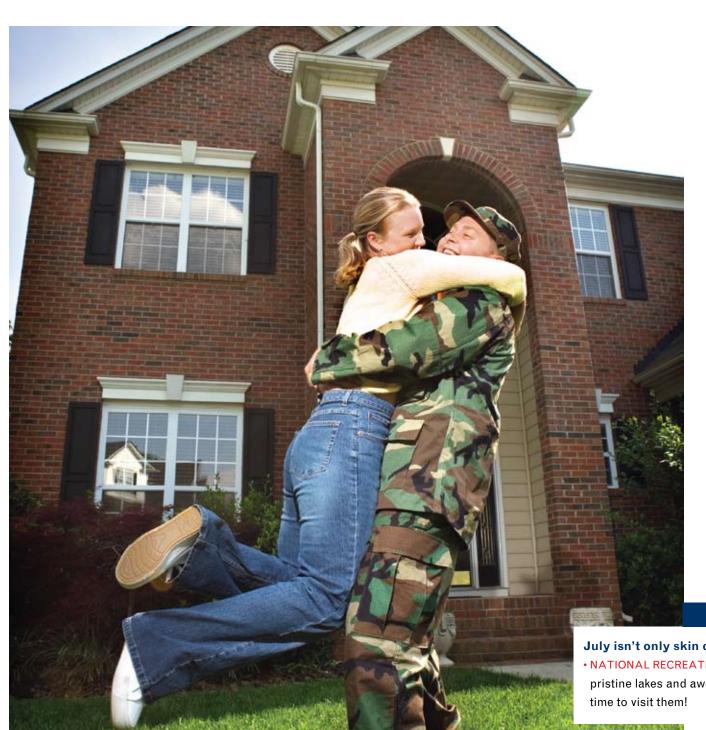
Goal weight for June: \_\_\_\_\_

Exercise goals: \_

What special memory did you make this month?

Protect your sight!
Call your local VA medical center for an appointment to ensure your eyes are in good shape. Find out more at www.va.gov.

					30	NE 2008
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2	3	<b>4</b> Plan a picnic this week.	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	What song makes you happy?	13	Army Day Flag Day
15 Father's Day	16	17	18	19	20	<b>21</b> First day of summer
22	23	<b>24</b> Take a dog for a walk in the beautiful weather.	25	26	27	<b>28</b> Don't forget to play!
29	What would make your life a success?				may 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	july 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31



# **JULY 2008**

# Love the skin you're in!

hile the sun's summer rays can sure feel good, they can really take their toll on your skin and eyes. Unprotected sun exposure can lead to skin cancer, age spots, cataracts and more. Try these tips to minimize damage:

**AVOID TANNING**, including tanning booths.

SKIP OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES BETWEEN 10 A.M. AND 4 P.M., when the sun's rays are strongest.

**OPT FOR LONG-SLEEVED SHIRTS,** long pants and wide-brimmed hats while outside. Or try clothing that has ultraviolet protection built right into the fabric.

## **USE SUNSCREEN WITH SPF 15 OR HIGHER**

**DAILY**—even on cloudy days, year round. Give it ample time to soak in by applying 30 minutes before you go outside.

WEAR SUNGLASSES WITH ULTRAVIOLET PROTECTION. You can purchase them prescription free at your local drugstore.

**MONITOR YOUR SKIN CAREFULLY.** Look for any suspicious growths or changes to any moles or freckles—early detection can be a real lifesaver. Visit your VA health care provider for an annual skin check.

Did you know?

July isn't only skin deep. It's also:

 NATIONAL RECREATION AND PARKS MONTH. Our massive forests, pristine lakes and awesome craters are our national treasure. Make the

# "Summer afternoon—Summer afternoon ... the two most beautiful words in the English language."

—Henry James, author

# **JULY 2008**

t's summertime—which means no hiding behind roomy sweaters. Don't forget to keep up with your 2008 health calendar:	:
Starting weight for July:	
Goal weight for July:	
Exercise goals:	
What special memory did you make this month?	25 1
Have sun fun while	
protecting your skin! Get important information about skin safety and cancer prevention at the Skin Cancer Foundation, www.skincancer.org.	

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
		1	2	3	Independence Day Celebrate America!	5
6	7	8	Read a book or magazine—outside!	10	11	12
Seen any good movies lately?	14	15	16	17	18	Access to a pool? Swim a few laps for fun and fitness.
20	Enjoy the fruits of summer.	22	23	24	25	26
Parent's Day	28	29	30	It's summertime! Don't you feel good?	june 2008 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	august 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31



# **AUGUST 2008**

# Embarrassed by psoriasis? Don't be!

red, thick and scaly—and that often burn or itch—you may be experiencing psoriasis. It often affects the elbows, scalp, knees and lower back, but it can strike anywhere on the body. Some people get outbreaks in winter, when air is drier and sun exposure minimal. It can also be provoked by stress, infections, alcohol use and some blood pressure medications. If you have psoriasis, talk to your VA health care provider about your treatment options before your condition develops into painful arthritis.

**FACT**: 125 million people worldwide have psoriasis. [World Psoriasis Day consortium]

**FACT**: Between 5.8 and 7.5 million Americans have psoriasis. [National Institutes of Health]

**FACT**: In 2006, more than 1,200 veterans were diagnosed with psoriasis in upstate New York alone. [VA Healthcare Network Upstate New York]

**FACT:** Up to 30 percent of people with psoriasis will go on to develop psoriatic arthritis, which is painful stiffness and swelling in and around the joints. [National Psoriasis Foundation]

# Did you know?

Psoriasis isn't the only thing to be aware of in August. It's also:

- CATARACT AWARENESS MONTH. Don't forget to wear your UVblocking sunglasses!
- NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION AWARENESS MONTH. Make sure your and your family's shots are up to date.

**FRIDAY** 

Air Force Day

Start a journal.

22

29

Try barbecuing a veggie kabob this weekend.

# "A strong positive mental attitude will create more miracles than any wonder drug."

—Patricia Neal, Academy Award–winning actress

**THURSDAY** 

21

28

# **AUGUST 2008**

16

23

30

What did you do this summer?

**SATURDAY** 

eep yourself summer trim as	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY
fall approaches. Track your				
changes to keep motivation strong:	july 2008 1 2 3 4 5	september 2008 1 2 3 4 5 6		
Namedia a consideration Accounts	6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19	7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20		
Starting weight for August:	20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30		
Goal weight for August:	27 20 29 30 31	26 29 30		
	3	4	5	6
xercise goals:				
	Get in those last		Write down 5 things	
What special memory did you	few beach days!	Coast Guard Day	you like about yourself.	
make this month?	10	11	12	13
	17	18	19	20
		4		
			Ten B	
			<b>为被</b>	
Don't let psoriasis	24	25	26	27
get under your skin!		23	20	_,
Get facts and figures from the				
National Psoriasis Foundation,				
www.psoriasis.org.				



# SEPTEMBER 2008

# Put the brakes on prostate cancer!

ealthy aging is all about taking care of yourself: eating right, exercising and scheduling tests for early detection of infection, inflammation and cancer.

Taking care of yourself is especially necessary for prostate cancer. While it's one of the most diagnosed cancers in America, men have only about a 3 percent risk of dying from the disease—thanks to slow-growing and highly treatable tumors. But that doesn't mean you shouldn't be diligent about prevention. Some men may not experience symptoms until the cancer has spread. Don't wait until your regular checkup if you experience any of these signs of prostate cancer:

- a need to urinate frequently, especially at night
- urination difficulties, such as trouble starting and stopping, a weak or interrupted flow or pain or a burning sensation while urinating
- erection difficulties and painful ejaculation
- blood in urine or semen
- stiffness or pain in the lower back, hips or upper thighs

Did you know?

#### September's celebration of healthy aging also features:

- OVARIAN CANCER AWARENESS MONTH. If detected at its earliest stage, the five-year survival rate is more than 90 percent.
- NATIONAL SICKLE CELL MONTH. If you are African-American, make testing for this blood disease a priority.
- NATIVE AMERICAN DAY, SEPTEMBER 26. Honor America's roots.

# "There is harmony in autumn, and a lustre in its sky."

—Percy Bysshe Shelley, English poet

# SEPTEMBER 2008

						S
all is a time of new beginnings.	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FR
Enjoy your new beginning as		1	2	3	4	5
a slimmer, healthier person! Check it out:						
it out:						
Starting						
weight for September:		Labor Day	Ramadan begins			
	7	8	9	10	11	13
Goal weight for September:	•					
Exercise goals:			Snack on some			
	Constant Don		naturally sweet		Patriot Day	Kn the
	Grandparents Day	45	baby carrots.	47	18	
What special memory did you	14	15	16	17	10	1
make this month?						
						W
				Constitution Day		the
	21	22	23	24	25	2
						MAN
		First day			Look up and see the	
		of autumn			changing leaves!	Nat
Find out more about	28	29	30	,		
good health at						au
www1.va.gov/health. Your heart and soul						3 10
will thank you!	Try on a pair					17 24
	of jeans from last	Rosh Hashanah				31

FRIDAY **SATURDAY 12** Knit a scarf for 19 20 Valk a mile in he brisk air. **27** 26 ative American Day ugust 2008 october 2008 1 2 3 4 4 5 6 7 8 9 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 0 11 12 13 14 15 16 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 7 18 19 20 21 22 23 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 24 25 26 27 28 29 30



# OCTOBER 2008

# Prescriptions for health!

nline prescription refill is our veterans' most-requested online service. It's secure, and your information remains private. The gateway to this efficient, safe and easy-to-use service is My HealtheVet, a Web-based program

service is My HealtheVet, a Web-based program designed specifically for veterans and their families. Simply go to www.myhealth.va.gov, and with a few keystrokes, your medications will be on their way to your doorstep. Going to the drugstore is a thing of the past! Other features of My HealtheVet are:

**IN CASE OF EMERGENCY**. A convenient electronic log to record your emergency contacts.

**MEDICAL LIBRARIES**. Two extensive online medical libraries at your fingertips.

**PHYSICIANS AND PROVIDERS.** One handy place to keep track of all your health care providers.

**VITALS**. An online space to monitor and graph your individual health statistics.

**VA HONORS**. Articles and presentations that honor our courageous veterans.

Don't delay. Your health benefits are on the way with just one click.

# Did you know?

October's about more than refilling a prescription. It's also:

- NATIONAL BREAST CANCER AWARENESS MONTH. Call your local VA medical center to schedule a mammogram today.
- NATIONAL DENTAL HYGIENE MONTH. Don't forget your teeth! Healthy teeth and gums help keep infections at bay.
- NATIONAL PHYSICAL THERAPY MONTH. The exercises your trained physical therapist has designed for you really work—if you do them.
- HEALTHY LUNG MONTH. If you haven't yet quit smoking, do it now!

# "Cherish all your happy moments: They make a fine cushion for old age."

—Christopher Morley, U.S. author and journalist

# OCTOBER 2008

void Halloween "tricks" by staying on course with your diet and exercise program:

Starting weight for October: \_\_\_

Goal weight for October: \_\_\_\_\_

Exercise goals: \_\_\_

What special memory did you make this month?

Want to be a healthy veteran? Make sure your In Patient Authentication is updated and complete. Then go to My HealtheVet at www. myhealth.va.gov and refill your prescription in minutes!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
september 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	november 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30		1	2	Bite into a crisp, fresh apple!	4
Take a leisurely stroll in the woods.	6	7	Yom Kippur begins at sundown	9	10	11
12.4	Navy Day Columbus Day	14	15	16	17	Don't "mask" your feelings. Talk to a sympathetic ear.
19	20	21	22	Halloween candy never tastes as good as it looks.	24	25
<b>26</b> Mother-in-law's Day	27	What's your favorite Halloween costume?	29	30	Halloween	



# **NOVEMBER 2008**

# Living with diabetes

earning you have diabetes changes your life—and your lifestyle. Although there's no cure, you can learn how to decrease your risk of complications by keeping your blood sugar, or glucose, within your target ranges. To control your blood sugar and stay well, take these measures:

**MONITOR YOUR BLOOD SUGAR.** Your VA health care provider will tell you how often and when to test.

**UPGRADE YOUR DIET.** Think healthy: plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

**GET MOVING.** Exercise is a must. For tips on getting started, try *MOVE!* Go to www.move. va.gov for more information.

**FOCUS ON YOUR FEET.** Diabetes may make you feel less sensation in your feet, making you vulnerable to infection. Check your feet daily for cuts or blisters.

**LISTEN TO YOUR DOCTOR.** Take your medicine as directed and contact your VA health care provider if you experience any side effects.

Did you know?

#### November is more than Thanksgiving. It also features:

- ALZHEIMER'S DISEASE AWARENESS MONTH. More than 5 million people suffer from this debilitating disease. To find out about the newest advances being made in Alzheimer's research, go to the Alzheimer's Association at www.alz.org.
- AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY'S GREAT AMERICAN SMOKEOUT, NOVEMBER 20.
   Your local VA medical center has a four-session group program called Quit
   Smart designed to help you quit smoking. Go to www1.va.gov/visns/visn02/bh/smoking.cfm for more information.

# "Never give in—never, never, never, never."

—Sir Winston Churchill, British prime minister and statesman

on't let the holidays get you down. Stick with your program. You'll be glad you did!
Starting weight for November:
Goal weight for November:
Exercise goals:
What special memory did you make this month?
Visit My HealtheVet at  www.myhealth.va.gov  to find out how other  veterans cope with diabetes,  Alzheimer's disease and  other conditions. Get the  latest facts and figures, too!

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
october 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31	december 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6  7 8 9 10 11 12 13  14 15 16 17 18 19 20  21 22 23 24 25 26 27  28 29 30 31					You are a veteran: an American hero!
Daylight-saving time ends	3	4 Election Day	5	6	Honor your fellow veterans this month: Call an old friend.	8
9	<b>10</b> Marine Corps Day	<b>11</b> Veterans Day	12	What's your favorite Thanksgiving dish?	14	15
16	17	18	19	Great American Smokeout	21	Name six things you're thankful for.
23	24	Try using a smaller plate for portion control.	26	27 Thanksgiving Day	28	29

# Winter Wonderland

K I P J N B I V G S T N I D T Q HOOGYAZYE OYRLNUHQE S R O L K X M D X I S O V S G G P T E LIFBPSSWCGFMUZILAYS P F T M A R T E O W N L V F G L F G F AAKBPHFUONAILSOJOZM OFFDYITNNTSLDCHOVAR C P G S S T S I E T A A O D N J K J G X L H E A H T W B S H D A E E Z N Q IADRHEWPCESLSLIV NMLYEIOFTULHNITS GSIZHHNTOIELOCAUEO TUHOUSOHWIRWRKTCBLG BIULAMKCGOCESUHSAFL M S D E D N Z H K R N E P F C Q A V U E F V O I W R A E E C S A L J H H O F NACRBIVAZIYTYQAVRRR HZDFDMMNO ICRUDCSIM SUAEQVIG C H X B C E P Q

# DECEMBER 2008

# 'Tis the season to have fun!

ake a break from wrapping gifts and making lists and try your hand at this puzzle. We guarantee it will help get you in the holiday spirit!

# Can you find these phrases in the grid at left?

- Build a snow fort
- Build a snowman
- Buy snow tires
- Curl up with a book
- Drink hot chocolate
- Go ice fishing
- Go ice skating
- Go on a sleigh ride
- Go sledding
- Have a snowball fight
- Insulate the house
- Make snow cream
- Play hockey
- Roast chestnuts
- Sit by the fireplace

Solutions on next page.

# Did you know?

**December** is more than plum pudding and snowball fights. It's also:

• SAFE TOYS AND GIFTS MONTH. Protect those you love. Make them happy with gifts that are thoughtful—and safe!

"If you just show up and try to do the right thing, the dawn will come. You wait and watch and work: You don't give up."

—Anne Lamott, U.S. author

# **DECEMBER 2008**

ou did it! A whole year has almost come and gone—and we hope you've lost some weight, got in some exercise and are ready to greet the new year with gusto! It's time to reflect on this past year and think about your goals for 2009:

Did you make any progress on eating healthier this year?

Did you make any progress on being more active this year?

My healthy living goals for 2009:

Your VA is here for you!
From wellness tips to benefit facts, everything you need to know is available from VA.
For more information, call 1-800-827-1000 or visit www.va.gov.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 World AIDS Day	2	Enjoy your festive treats, but keep them to one or two a week.	4	5	6
Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day	8	9  Don't forget to buy yourself a gift!	10	11	12	13
14	Check out the neighborhood decorations—it'll make your walk a breeze.	16	17	18 What's your favorite Christmas carol?	19	20
Hanukkah begins at sundown First day of winter	22	23	24	25 Christmas Day	<b>26</b> Kwanzaa begins	27
28	29	Celebrate a year of YOU!	31  New Year's Eve		november 2008  1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30	january 2009  1 2 3  4 5 6 7 8 9 10  11 12 13 14 15 16 17  18 19 20 21 22 23 24  25 26 27 28 29 30 31



# Make a difference close to home

any of today's medical breakthroughs are the result, in part, of VA research. As a veteran, you may be eligible to participate in one of the Department of Veterans Affairs many ongoing clinical trials—and play a role in helping veterans and their families stay healthy.

Make a difference and enroll in a beneficial and completely confidential study at Syracuse VA Medical Center if you have a history or diagnosis of:

• colitis

- diabetes
- respiratory problems
- stroke or transient ischemic attacks (TIAs)
  Clinical trials are extremely safe and extensively reviewed by committed independent advisory boards. Participants are followed closely by medical specialists who devote their lives to improving the health of those suffering from these illnesses.

For more information, contact your local VA medical center or call Paula Becker, R.N., at (315) 425-4400, ext. 52271, or Seema Mirje at ext. 52325.

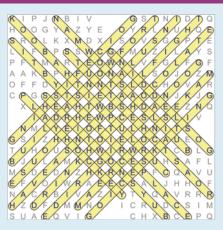
# What are you worth?

olunteering is another way to serve your country. Your well-earned vitality, commitment, expertise and patience are values that can foster the health of your fellow veterans and your community. It's impossible to calculate the amount of caring and sharing that the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service (VAVS) volunteers provide to veteran patients. They are a priceless asset to the nation's veterans and the Department of Veterans Affairs at large.

VAVS volunteers provide service in long-term rehabilitation facilities, community outreach centers, counseling centers, outpatient medical centers and more. Whatever your interest, there's a place for you to serve as a health care volunteer and reap the rewards of well-being that only giving can provide.

Go to www.va.gov/volunteer to calculate what your volunteer hours are worth in monetary value. Complete a simple online registration to connect your interests with existing local volunteer programs. In a few days, you'll be contacted by a local upstate New York VAVS representative. If you prefer, you can also go to your nearest VA medical center and sign up.

## Puzzle answer key



# Useful Web sites and hotlines to make your life easier

Each of these entries offers free, reliable and professional information.

VA ENROLLMENT INFORM TION 1-888-823-9656

RELI BLE HE LTH INFORM TION www.myhealth.va.gov

MEDICAL CA

Call your local primary care doctor or your local VA medical center

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS

www.va.gov

VA HEALTHC

www1.va.gov/VISNS/VISN02

VA FEDERAL BENEFITS FOR VETERANS AND DEPENDENTS

www1.va.gov/OPA/IS1/index.asp

HEALTHIERUS VETERANS

www.healthierusveterans.va.gov

VA MENTAL HEALTH

www.mentalhealth.va.gov

VA NATIONAL CENTER FOR HEALTH PROMOTION AND DISEASE PREVENTION

www.prevention.va.gov

VA NATIONAL CENTER FOR PATIENT SAFETY www.patientsafety.gov

VA NATIONAL CENTER
FOR POSTTRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER
www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/index.jsp

VA NATIONAL HEPATITIS C PROGRAM www.hepatitis.va.gov

VA NATIONAL HIV/AIDS PROGRAM www.hiv.va.gov



VA NATIONAL SUICIDE PREVENTION LIFELINE 1-800-273-TALK (8255)

VA PUBLIC HEALTH INFLUENZA (FLU) www.publichealth.va.gov/flu

VA SEAMLESS TRANSITION HOME PROGRAM (for returning active duty, National Guard and Reserve service members of Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom)

www.seamlesstransition.va.gov

AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY www.cancer.org

MOVE

(Weight Management Program for Veterans) www.move.va.gov

MY HEALTH<u>e</u>VET

(a personal online health record and health library)
www.myhealth.va.gov

# { What's for dinner? }

# Delicious—and healthy—recipes for you and your family to enjoy!

## Turkey, spinach and apple wrap



#### Perfect for lunch or a light dinner.

- 1 Tbsp. reduced fat mayonnaise
- 2 tsp. honey mustard
- 2 whole-wheat sandwich wraps or flour or corn tortillas
- 2 cups baby spinach leaves (washed and dried), loosely packed OR 2 large leaves of a soft leafy green lettuce
- 4 thin slices of turkey breast (4 oz.)
- 1/4 Granny Smith apple, sliced paper thin

Combine mayonnaise and mustard. Lay out either wraps or tortillas. Spread the edges of each with the mayonnaise mixture. Leaving 1 inch free on the side closest to you, arrange a layer of greens on top of wraps. Top each layer with half the turkey slices. Evenly divide apple slices and lay lengthwise across the turkey. Starting at one end, roll up the end of the sandwich wrap or the tortilla, then wrap tightly in plastic wrap and refrigerate, seam side down, up to 4 hours before serving. When ready to serve, remove plastic wrap and cut each wrap or rolled-up tortilla in half, at an angle.

**Serves 2.** Per serving: 234 calories, 27 g carbohydrates, 20 g protein, 7 g total fat (1 g saturated), 3 g fiber, 294 mg sodium

Reprinted courtesy of the American Institute for Cancer Research

## Italian vegetable bake

A perfect main dish: hearty, inexpensive, great tasting—and with all your recommended servings of vegetables, too!

- 1 can whole tomatoes (28 oz.)
- 1 medium onion, sliced
- ½ pound fresh green beans, sliced
- 34 cup fresh okra, cut into ½ inch pieces (or ½ 10 oz. pkg. frozen okra)
- 3/4 cup finely chopped green pepper
- 2 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. fresh basil, chopped (or 1 tsp. dried basil, crushed)
- 1½ tsp. fresh oregano leaves, chopped (or ½ tsp. dried oregano, crushed)
- 3 medium zucchinis, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 1 medium eggplant, cut into 1-inch cubes
- 2 Tbsp. Parmesan cheese, grated

Drain and coarsely chop tomatoes. Save liquid. Mix together tomatoes and reserved liquid, onion, green beans, okra, green pepper, lemon juice and herbs. Cover and bake at 325° F for 15 minutes. Mix in zucchini and eggplant and continue baking, covered, 60–70 more minutes or until vegetables are tender. Stir occasionally. Sprinkle top with Parmesan cheese just before serving.

**Serves 18.** Per ½ cup serving: 36 calories, < 1 mg cholesterol, < 1 g fat (< 1 g saturated), 86 mg sodium

Reprinted courtesy of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

# Poached pears

# An elegant finish to a wonderful meal. Serve chilled or warm, with a scoop of low-fat frozen yogurt on the side.

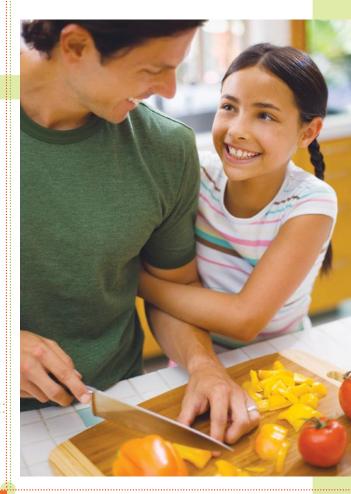
- 2 cups cranberry juice
- 1 cup water
- ½ cup granulated sugar
- 1 cinnamon stick
- 4 pears, medium ripe but firm, peeled with stem intact
- 2 Tbsp. sliced almonds, toasted

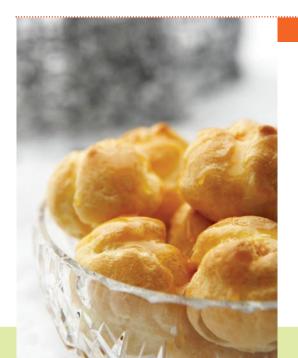
In large saucepan, heat juice, water, sugar and cinnamon over medium heat until sugar dissolves, about 5 minutes. Add pears. Cook, turning pears frequently, until tender, about 15 minutes. Using a slotted spoon,

transfer pears to cutting board. Reserve liquid. Using a sharp paring knife, slice each pear into a fan shape while still keeping pear and stem intact. Place pears on 4 individual serving plates. Press down gently to further fan out the pear. Cook reserved liquid over medium-high heat until slightly thickened and syrupy, about 5 minutes. Remove cinnamon stick. Spoon syrup over pears. Sprinkle with almonds.

**Serves 4.** Per serving: 310 calories, 75 g carbohydrates, 1 g protein, 2 g total fat (< 1 g saturated), 5 g fiber, 3 mg sodium

Reprinted courtesy of the American Institute for Cancer Research





# Homestyle biscuits

# A delicious treat that's less than 100 calories!

- 2 cups flour
- 2 tsp. baking power
- 1/4 tsp. baking soda
- 1/4 tsp. salt
- 2 Tbsp. sugar
- <sup>2</sup>/<sub>3</sub> cup low-fat buttermilk
- 3 Tbsp. + 1 tsp. vegetable oil

Preheat oven to 450° F. In a medium bowl, combine flour, baking powder, baking soda, salt and sugar. In a small bowl, stir together buttermilk and oil. Pour

over flour mixture, stirring until mixed thoroughly. On a lightly floured surface, lightly knead dough for 10 to 12 strokes. Roll out dough to <sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>-inch thickness. Cut with a 2-inch biscuit or cookie cutter, dipping cutter in flour between cuts. Transfer biscuits to an ungreased baking sheet. Bake for 12 minutes or until golden brown. Serve warm.

**Serves 15.** Per serving: 99 calories, < 1 mg cholesterol, 3 g total fat (< 1 g saturated), 72 mg sodium

Reprinted courtesy of the National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute

Reaching us is easy

#### **VA** medical centers

#### **Albany**

113 Holland Avenue Albany, NY 12208 (518) 626-5000 (800) 223-4810

#### Batavia

222 Richmond Avenue Batavia, NY 14020 (585) 297-1000

#### Bath

76 Veterans Avenue Bath, NY 14810 (607) 664-4000 (877) 845-3247

#### Buffalo

3495 Bailey Avenue Buffalo, NY 14215 (716) 834-9200 (800) 532-8387

#### Canandaigua

400 Fort Hill Avenue Canandaigua, NY 14424 (585) 394-2000 (800) 204-9917

#### **Syracuse**

800 Irving Avenue Syracuse, NY 13210 (315) 425-4400 (800) 221-2883

# Community-based outpatient clinics

#### Auburn

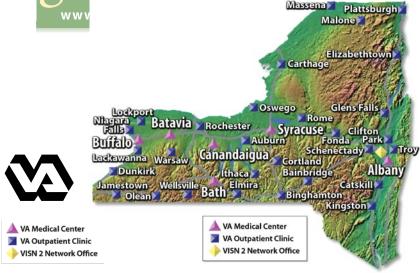
17 Lansing Street Auburn, NY 13021 (315) 255-7002

#### **Bainbridge**

109 North Main Street Bainbridge, NY 13733 (607) 967-8590

#### **Binghamton**

425 Robinson Street Binghamton, NY 13904 (607) 772-9100



#### Carthage

3 Bridge Street Carthage, NY 13619 (315) 493-4180

#### Catskill

Greene Medical Bldg. 159 Jefferson Heights Catskill, NY 12414 (518) 943-7515

#### Clifton Park

1673 Route 9 Clifton Park, NY 12065 (518) 383-8506

#### Cortland

1129 Commons Avenue Cortland, NY 13045 (607) 662-1517

#### Dunkirk

Valor Health Center 166 East Fourth Street Dunkirk, NY 14048 (800) 310-5001

#### Elizabethtown

P.O. Box 277
Park Street
Elizabethtown, NY 12932
(518) 873-3295

#### Elmira

Health Services Bldg. 200 Madison Avenue Suite 2E Elmira, NY 14901 (877) 845-3247 (Bath)

#### Fonda

Camp Mohawk Plaza 2623 State Highway 30A Fonda, NY 12068 (518) 853-1247

#### Glens Falls

84 Broad Street Glens Falls, NY 12801 (518) 798-6066

#### Ithaca

VA Outpatient Clinic 10 Arrowwood Drive Ithaca, NY 14850 (607) 274-4680

#### **Jamestown**

The Resource Center 896 East Second Street Jamestown, NY 14701 (716) 661-1447

#### Kinaston

63 Hurley Avenue Kingston, NY 12401 (845) 331-8322

#### Lackawanna

Our Lady of Victory Family Care Center 227 Ridge Road Lackawanna, NY 14218 (716) 822-5944

#### Lockport

Ambulatory Care Center 5875 S. Transit Road Lockport, NY 14094 (716) 433-2025

#### Malone

183 Park Street Suite 3 Malone, NY 12953 (518) 481-2545

#### Massena

1 Hospital Drive Massena, NY 13662 (315) 769-4253

#### Niagara Falls

VA Outpatient Clinic 2201 Pine Avenue Niagara Falls, NY 14301-2300 (800) 532-8387

- For enrollment information, call 1-888-823-9656.
- For medical care and clinic appointments, call your local primary care doctor or your local VA medical center.
- For reliable health information on the Web, visit www.myhealth.va.gov.

#### Olean

465 North Union Street Olean, NY 14760-2658 (716) 373-7709

#### **Oswego**

Seneca Hills Health Services Center 105 County Route 45A Oswego, NY 13126 (315) 343-0925

#### **Plattsburgh**

80 Sharron Avenue Plattsburgh, NY 12901 (518) 561-6247

#### Rochester

465 Westfall Road Rochester, NY 14620 (585) 463-2600

#### Rome

125 Brookley Road Bldg. 510 Rome, NY 13441 (315) 334-7100

#### Schenectady

1322 Gerling Street Sheridan Plaza Schenectady, NY 12308 (518) 346-3334

#### Troy

Troy Primary Čare Practice 295 River Street Troy, NY 12180 (518) 274-7707

#### Warsaw

Wyoming County Community Hospital 400 N. Main Street Warsaw, NY 14569 (585) 297-1050

#### Wellsville

3458 Riverside Drive, Route 19 Wellsville, NY 14895 (877) 845-3247 (Bath)